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## PSYCHOLOGICAL LITERATURE.

*The Theory of Knowledge.* A Contribution to some Problems of Logic and Metaphysics. By L. T. HOBHOUSE. London, 1896, pp. 627.

According to the author, the world of thought at the present day is in a somewhat anomalous amorphous condition. The warehouses of science are being filled to repletion with an accumulated mass of facts, the details of which even a Heaven-born Aristotle could not properly grasp and unify. The deluge of specialism still continues. Systems of philosophy that antedate this deluge are therefore undetermined by it; a new construction is necessary. The philosopher, like the theologian, has not the hardihood of the past; he proclaims with more diffidence than formerly his God-given panacea of all difficulties. Moreover, there is an elegant skepticism abroad. The question is not only, Is philosophy skeptical in its tendency? but also, Is not science bankrupt? It is the elegant, aristocratic thing to do, to languidly lean back in your carriage as it rolls along Rotten Row, and to declare that that is immutable and sure which—suits your needs. The author endeavors, in a fair-minded way, to present to us the result of some “psychical chemistry”—he will unite the merits of Mill and Spencer with those of Lotze and Hegel, and present a higher whole.

The work is too large to allow of an analysis of it here, but a few points may be noted. Logic, in contradistinction to psychology, we are informed, examines the content, grounds, and validity of belief in general. In logic we have to deal with knowledge, that is, the relation of belief to fact. It may be asked, are not our beliefs facts? and if our beliefs are not facts, how are we to find out the difference—by other beliefs? This is decidedly a topic for psychology preëminently. Knowledge of the immediately present may be called apprehension and this the starting point of knowledge. The content of immediate apprehension is extension, size, shape, position and time. The atomic sensation is a figment. Memory “is not a mere image or fainter repetition of something which is *de facto* past.” Such an image could be only—an image, a present fact, “which vanishes in its turn and requires memory to recall it from the limbo of departed thoughts.” “Memory, then, is an assertion—or, if you prefer to employ the word as a name for a permanent capacity of the mind unknown to us except by its results—it is a faculty of making assertions.” “It is an assertion of the past, and hence a reference to something not now present,” which appears to amount to this, that the past or the knowledge that an event is past is an assertion of the past, a statement perilously similar to the so-called Law of Identity. “Judgment affirms the reference to reality contained in an idea,” and “in so doing it necessarily predicates something of something otherwise known.” “Negation rejects a suggested reference.” The author further treats at length of inference and knowledge, enlarging on the doctrines of the conception of external reality, substance, etc.

The author is, on the whole, somewhat diffuse, often quite diffuse, but is very fair-minded, an accurate psychologist, and has furnished an admirable exposition for students as well as a suggestive treatise for others.

ARTHUR ALLIN.